



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Health Service Regulation • Mental Health Licensure and Certification Section
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Michael F. Easley, Governor

Dempsey Benton, Secretary

Stephanie M. Alexander, Chief

NOTICE Emergency Relocation of Clients

To: All Licensed N.C.G.S. §122C 24-hour Providers
From: Stephanie Alexander, Chief, Mental Health Licensure & Certification Section
Date: November 2007
Re: Emergencies requiring relocation of clients

This notice is to provide guidelines a provider must follow if they experience an emergency, which makes the facility unavailable for use and requires relocation of clients.

For the purpose of this notice, the term "emergency" refers to any situation, which is sudden and unforeseen, such as a natural disaster, fire, or other facility catastrophe, which necessitates the removal of clients from the facility to protect their health and safety.

The term does not apply to emergency placements of clients outside of a facility due to behavior problems.

Following are several examples:

- A hurricane, snowstorm, tornado, flood, or other natural occurrence in which allowing clients to remain in the facility may jeopardize their health or safety.
- A facility fire, dysfunctional heating or cooling system (in cold or hot weather respectively), dysfunctional septic system, or other situation in which allowing clients to remain in the facility may jeopardize their health or safety.
- Any other unforeseen occurrence not noted above in which allowing clients to remain in the facility may jeopardize their health or safety.

Below you will find steps to take depending on the setting to which the provider is moving clients. These include (a) licensed facility to licensed facility of same service code (i.e., .5600B to .5600B), and (b) licensed facility to any other type of licensed or unlicensed facility.

Licensed Facility to Licensed Facility of Same Service Code

If clients are moved from one licensed facility to another licensed facility of the same service code, and the capacity for that facility *will not be exceeded*, it is not necessary to notify DHSR.



Licensed Facility to Any Other Type of Licensed or Unlicensed Facility/Setting

This includes residential to non-residential, residential to a hotel, Level IV to Level III, or other type of move from a licensed facility to a differently licensed or unlicensed facility.

When this type of move must occur due to an emergency situation as described above, it is recommended that the licensee or designee ensure the following:

1. Ensure the safety and health of the clients by evacuating them to a safe and secure facility where the clients' health needs will be met. There must be sufficient staff, food, medicine, medical equipment and supplies to ensure the safety and health needs of the clients.
2. As soon as possible after the evacuation, notify DHSR Mental Health Licensure and Certification Section at 919-855-3795 and the DHSR Construction Section at 919-855-3893 via phone and explain the situation and the need for relocation of clients.
3. Submit in writing by facsimile (919-715-8078) or mail the following information to DHSR Mental Health Licensure and Certification Section:
 - Explanation and rationale for evacuating the facility and moving the clients to a new location.
 - The name and address of the site to which the clients were relocated.
 - Contact person and phone number(s).
 - How the facility implemented their emergency plan in accordance with 10A NCAC 27G .0207—Emergency Plans and Supplies.
 - A copy of the facility's emergency plan. The facility's emergency plan should include the identification of potential evacuation sites to which clients might be moved in the event of an emergency, with assurance that the evacuation site will be able to accommodate the health and safety needs of the clients.
 - When the provider anticipates moving the clients back to the facility or in the event that the facility cannot be used (i.e. destroyed or otherwise unavailable for use), when and how the clients will be moved to an appropriately licensed setting.
 - Names and phone numbers of all client case managers, including the date the case managers were notified of the evacuation and relocation.
4. If the facility cannot be used in the immediate future, the provider must have a plan, and document this plan, regarding relocation of clients to a permanent licensed setting. DHSR will work with the provider to license a new facility as soon as possible.

Please contact this office if you have any questions about this procedure.

Cc: Jim Jarrard, DMH/DD/SAS
Fran Pedrigi, DHSR Construction